

Rhetorical Devices: Analogy

Objective: As they continue through Unit I (Reading Literature and Writing Narrative), students will be able to recognize select rhetorical devices such as antithesis, analogy, and rhetorical questions and utilize these devices in strengthening their own writing strategy in order to score a 4 or 5 on the CCSS rubric for narrative writing. Students will also recognize author Toni Morrison's use of such devices in the novel, *Song of Solomon*, identifying and tracking the significance of each.

The analogy is as important to the writer as the computer model is to the builder.

The analogy is the somewhat more down-to-earth version of the simile. Both compare two things for a specific purpose, but while the simile usually does so with a fair amount of stylistic flair, the analogy does so for much more pragmatic reasons. The analogy makes use of something already well known to explain something that is less well known. It can be one of the most effective strategic devices in both education and persuasion, helping to quickly make your reader see precisely what you mean.

- Perhaps the most useful form of the analogy is one in which a simple argument is substituted for a more complex argument, to help your readers understand the underlying premise. Once you have them in agreement about the simple argument, it becomes much easier for them to see and accept the more complex form. The analogy can border on a logical fallacy when the two arguments do not actually correlate exactly, but for the most part, analogies may help to shed light on a confusing issue.

- Example:

“When your enemy comes to you in pain, you must do whatever is in your power to help ease that pain. For when a child comes to you in pain, do you not do everything you can? Know then that in the eyes of the Lord we are all His children.”

- An analogy might also be used to further elaborate on a point that is already understood. Rather than substituting, the analogy furthers the initial point, letting the reader see aspects of it that may have been missed. It can also be used to add rhetorical force to the first point, building up the argument through stronger and stronger repetition.

- Example:
 - “The desire for wealth, when unchecked, can lead only to great evil. For though a man may begin with but a sip of wine, without restraint, the urge will grow until one day he is a drunkard, blinded to all but his need, taking whatever steps are needed to find his fix.”
 - “As the endless waves wash eternally upon the shore, so does true love overwhelm the soul.”
 - “Just as a parent is liable for damages caused by his minor children, so too should a dog owner be responsible for his dog.
 - “Texting has become the playground note-passing of twenty-first-century kids.”

In the following phrases, create an analogy that uses each of the two elements.

- wealth and love
- leading a sports team and leading a major corporation
- a piece of old technology and dinosaurs
- intelligence and a dinosaur